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SEPTEMBER 1991

# WIZARD©

No. 1

THE GUIDE TO COMICS

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

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Penciled by Tod Smith
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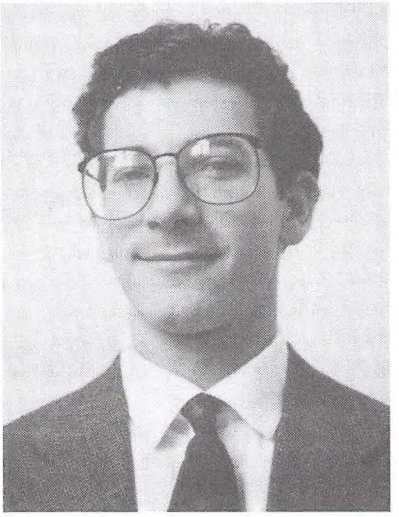


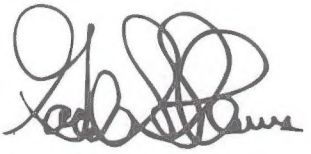
I would like to congratulate you on your purchase of *Wizard: The Guide To Comics #1* COLLECTOR'S EDITION. I believe that in your journeys throughout the comic book world, information is hard to assemble. You must use one source for new comics, one for your values, one for your interviews, and so on. Now, all under one cover, you can get it all. Original artwork by your favorite artists, interviews with today's top personalities, previews of new unreleased books, plus much much more.

I want to thank everyone who made *Wizard* possible. I'm proud that we all make such a great team. I would like to personally thank Hank Rose (Comic Images), Walter Wang (Comics Unlimited), and Steve Saffel (Marvel) and especially Martin Schranz for their guidance, without which I could not have started.

It is my intent that every month you will be informed about everything you want to know about comic books and related items. I've been a comic book fan for quite some time, and Wizard is exactly what I wished for all these years. Now, eight months and four hours of sleep later, I present to you, *Wizard: The Guide To Comics #1.*

Every month you will get a chance to collect a very special gift from the Wizard. So watch out, even we don't know what might be next. Be assured, everyone will want one!

Sincerely,



P.S. - I love getting mail, so please write and let me know what you think.

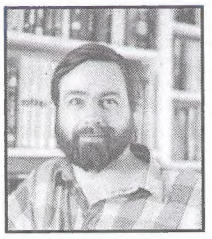
## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

**Gregg McElhatton**
Introduced to comics three years ago, and still hasn't forgiven himself for not doing so earlier. Greg is a freshman at James Madison University in Virginia.

**Linda Perillo**
Linda is glad to be a part of Wizard Press as the Advertising Manager. She has some great ideas and can't wait to get started.

**Michael Berry**
A San Francisco-based writer whose credits include reviews of comics-related material for the *San Francisco Chronicle.*

**Jane Scarano**
Specializes in pre-press production services. Jane also publishes *Cut & Paste*, a resourceful newsletter for desktop publishers of all computer types.



**Lawrence Watt-Evans**
Makes his living writing science fiction, fantasy, and horror, and has also scripted stories for Marvel's *Open Space.*

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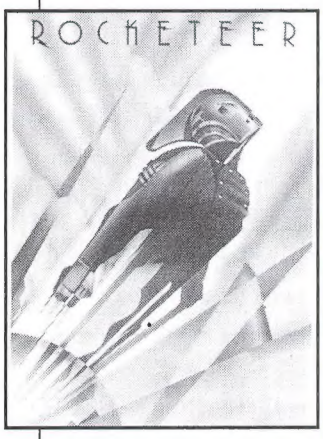
# CONTENTS

WIZARD No. 1

VOL. 1 NUMBER 1
SEPTEMBER 1991

**ABOUT OUR COVER**

Spider-Man Sports a Wizard's costume to kick off our premiere issue. Spider-Man can be seen in four monthly titles. Plus, will be starring in his own motion picture due out in early 1992.




**PREVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE**

The ROCKETEER will be taking off this summer in theaters near you. Our interview with Bill Campbell will help jumpstart your boosters for this great summer classic, by Disney.

89

## FEATURES

**WRITING AND DRAWING THE WEB-HEAD** 8
Interview with cover artist Todd McFarlane. A quick peak into what makes the web slinger tick.

**DIGITAL COLOR** 18
Comic books and computers, do they mix well? We'll show you their true colors.

## PREVIEWS

**HORROR COMICS: THEN AND NOW** 77
Do they compare? Don't get scared!

**PICKS FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT** 82
The comics you want to know more about!

**REMEMBERING THE MIDDLE-MAN** 94
Insight into how distributors view the comics market.

## GUIDES AND LISTINGS

**WIZARD'S COMIC WATCH** 16
Two hot back issues that will soon be hard to find.

**GRADING YOUR COMICS** 22
A great way to recognize quality. Grading made simple.

**COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE** 25
Accurate values from silver age to present.

**TRADING CARDS** 66
The 90's are the decade to collect, so collect them all.

**TOY FIGURES GUIDE** 70
We've brought you the hottest figures of the 80's and 90's

**#1 ISSUES SHIPPING** 71
Check out all these new comics before they arrive.

**COMIC SHIPPING CALENDAR** 72
Find out when your favorite comics will hit the shelves.

**SHOW AND CONVENTION CALENDAR** 99
Get ready, the show is coming to town.

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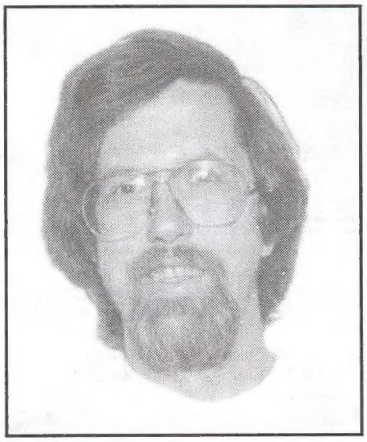
# JUST ASKING

## EDITORS, WHAT ARE THEY, WHAT DO THEY DO?



Walk into any comic book shop and ask those questions to the folks at the racks, buying this week's shipment of comics, and I'll bet you can't get a satisfactory answer.

Matter of fact, ask the vast majority of professional comics freelancers and I'll bet you *still* can't get a satisfactory answer.

Twenty-five years ago, during the heyday of strong editorial presences such as Mort Weisinger (*Superman*), Julius Schwartz (*Flash, Green Lantern*) and Stan Lee (anything at Marvel), the answers would have been obvious. The editor sets the tone for the comics, decides on the type of story to be told, helps the writer and artist produce their best work — either by suggesting story ideas or by engaging in brainstorming sessions.

Today, as Todd McFarlane notes in his interview in this issue, it's not unusual for a comics creator to hand in the finished product (in Todd's case, the entire book — words and pictures) without the editor ever having seen it before. In that case, the editor is little more than a traffic cop between the creator and the production department.

Another comics pro, an inker, told me that he wouldn't know if he had a particular assignment until he had done a "test" page and the title's regular penciller "okayed" his work — despite the fact that the book's *editor* already thought the inker was the best man for the job.

What's wrong with this picture? Could it be that the biggest problem with comics today is that nobody is telling the writers and artists when they are being self-indulgent? Or obscure? Or just plain bad?

Just asking, you understand.

Pat O'Neill


## OUR STAFF

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Q.

***Is the new Ghost Rider the same as the one who had his own series back in the mid 70's?***

Vito Pasciello - Buffalo, N.Y.

A.

Marvel has hinted strongly that the new Ghost Rider (Danny Ketch) is possessed by Zarathos, the Spirit of Vengeance. who at one time had possessed Johnny Blaze, the original Ghost Rider. However, no one knows for sure what the origin of the new Ghost Rider is. Also, before the 70's Ghost Rider there was a western Ghost Rider, Hamilton Slade. Who has nothing to do with either of the demonic Ghost Riders. He was last seen in *Avengers West Coast #41*, now calling himself the Phantom Rider.

Q.

***Are there any DC/Marvel crossovers planned for the future?***

Ben Dover - Spring Valley, N.Y.

A.

Rumor has it that DC will soon be reprinting all of the classic DC/Marvel crossovers in trade paperback form, including *Hulk vs Batman*, *Superman and Spider-Man*, and the *X-Men/Teen Titans* crossover. Unfortunately, the JLA/Avengers crossover was cancelled years ago, and if the companies are planning anything new, no one is talking. Some team ups that I'm sure we'd all like to see would are Batman/Punisher, Thor vs Superman, and Wolverine vs Lobo. It doesn't hurt to dream!

Letters are welcome from everyone. Here is your chance to let us know what you think. Address all questions and correspondence to:
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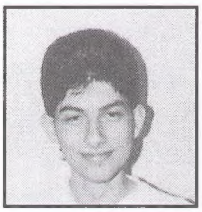
Q.

***What does the "DC" in DC Comics stand for?***

Dick Holland - New City, N.Y.

A.

It stands for Detective Comics, one of the company's flagship titles. This is a question we posed to many readers of comics and were quite surprised how many people didn't know this. We all have to find out some time or another.



Q.

***I really enjoyed the Predator vs Aliens mini series from Dark Horse comics. Is there any chance of a Predator vs Aliens movie?***

"Spock" Goldstein - Albany, N.Y.

A.

It doesn't look like it. The idea was proposed, but the two main monsters are two separate liscensed characters, and the legal red tape that would have to be cut through makes the project impossible.

Q.

***Is Cletus Kasady (from Amazing Spider-Man #344 & 345) going to be the new Venom?***

Craig Cornell - Pearl River, N.Y.

A.

It sure looks that way. A small piece of the Venom alien costume tore away from the main suit and landed on Cletus. It appears like there will be two Venoms running around the Marvel Universe.

# WRITING & DRAW

**by Patrick Daniel O'Neill**

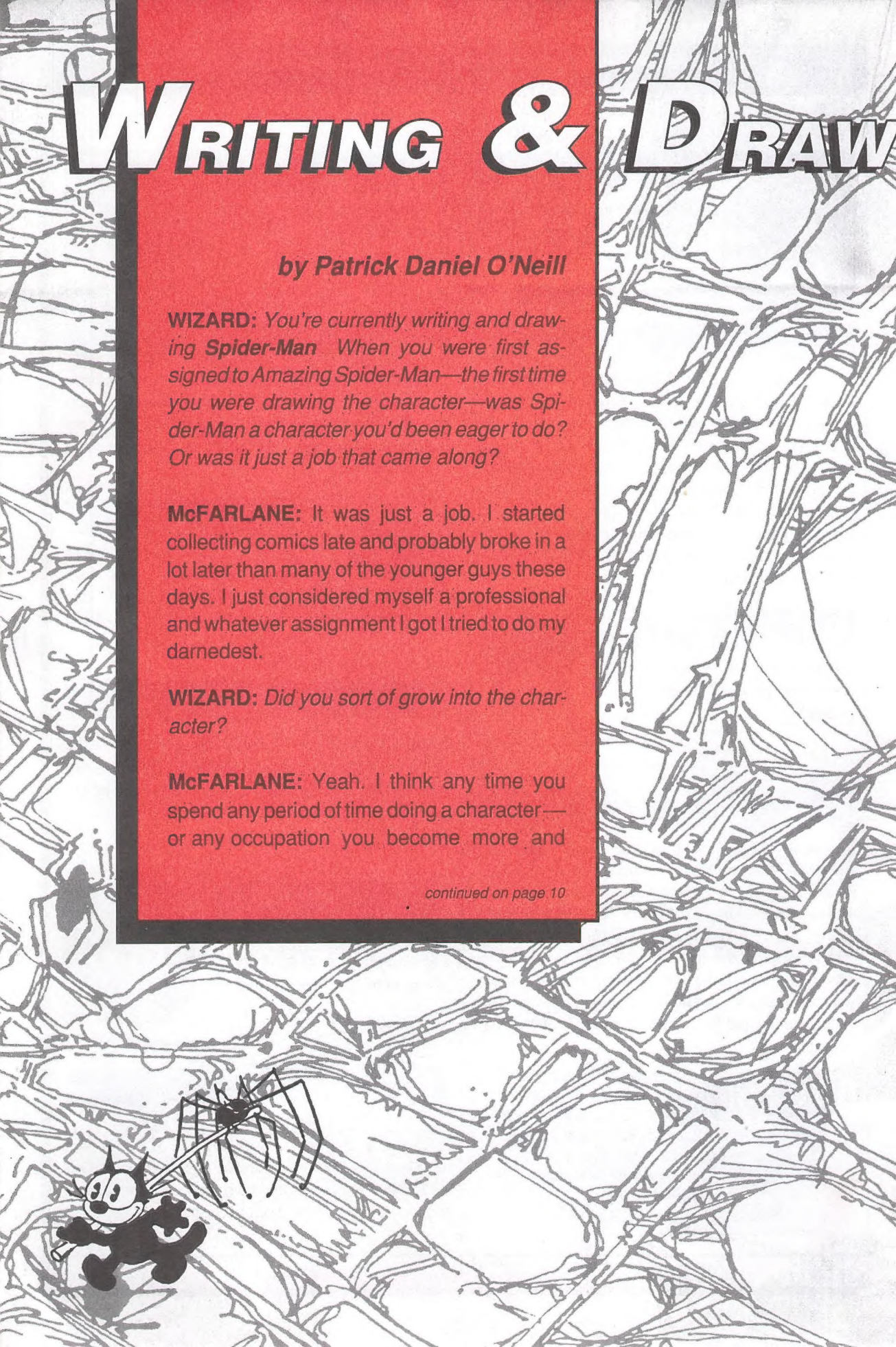
**WIZARD:** *You're currently writing and drawing* ***Spider-Man*** *When you were first assigned to Amazing Spider-Man—the first time you were drawing the character—was Spider-Man a character you'd been eager to do? Or was it just a job that came along?*

**McFARLANE:** It was just a job. I started collecting comics late and probably broke in a lot later than many of the younger guys these days. I just considered myself a professional and whatever assignment I got I tried to do my darnedest.

**WIZARD:** *Did you sort of grow into the character?*

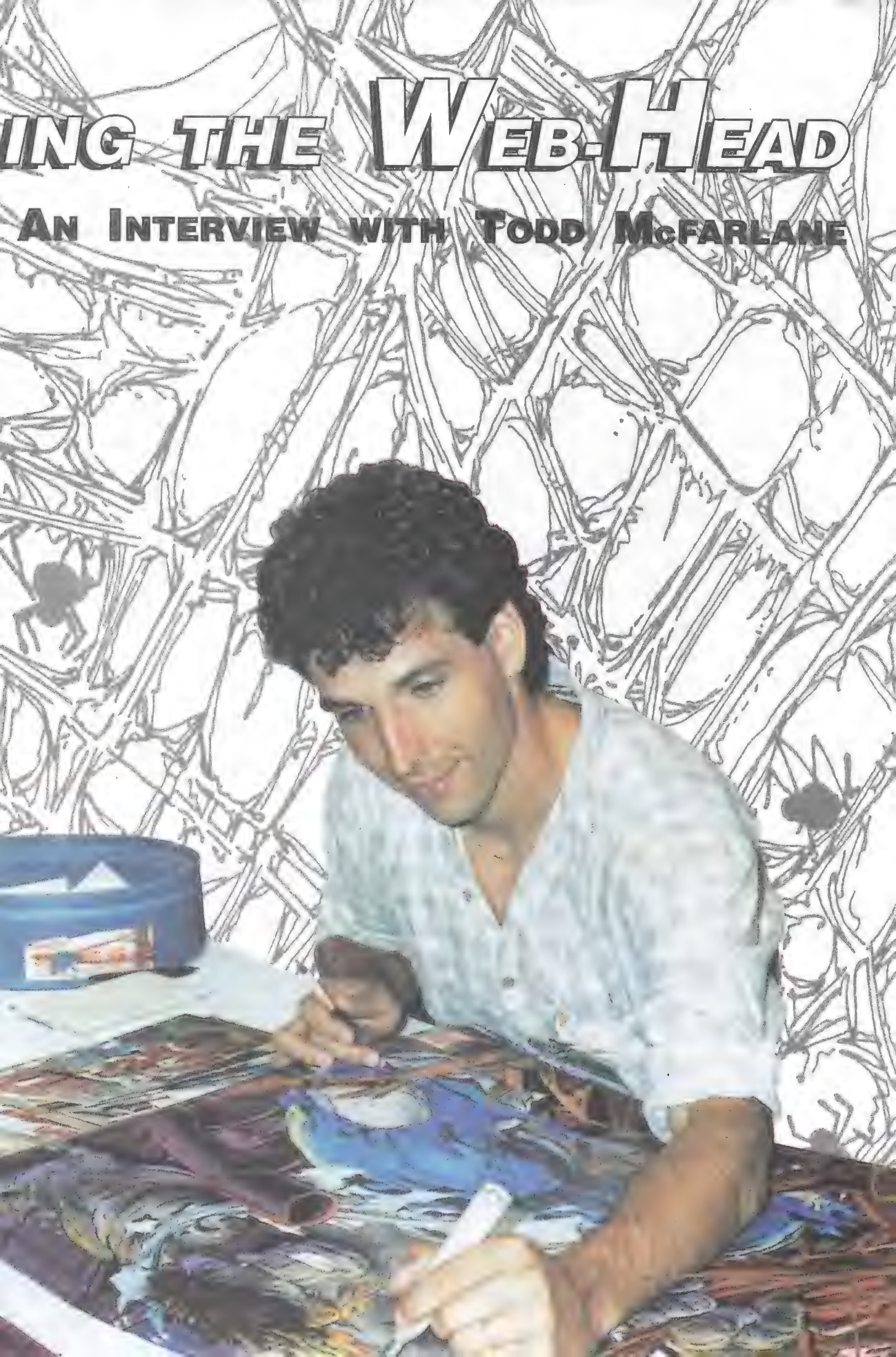
**McFARLANE:** Yeah. I think any time you spend any period of time doing a character—or any occupation you become more and

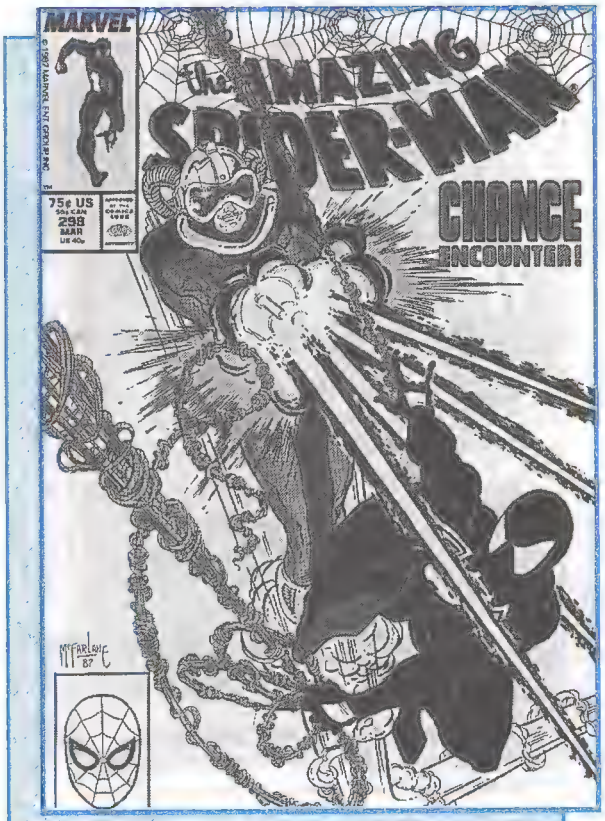
*continued on page 10*



# ING THE WEB-HEAD

## AN INTERVIEW WITH TODD MCFARLANE






**Todd's very first Spider-Man artwork. Has it really been 4 years?**

more comfortable with it. Right now, I feel more comfortable doing Spider-Man because of the repetition; I don't really have to pay attention to what the characters look like because I've drawn them for so long. If I took over *Iron Man*, say, I'd have to learn who all the people are around him; it would be kind of a growing process.

**WIZARD:** *Can that familiarity also lead to a boredom, eventually — a sameness, such that the enthusiasm for what you're doing starts to wane?*

**McFARLANE:** I think so. Probably, other than a head-on fight with somebody up at the office, what would get me off the book is just "I've done Spider-Man for so many years, I've done this pose, this shot a thousand times. I just don't have the energy for it anymore." When that comes, I might take another character with a totally different feel and create a stir with him, the way we did with Spider-Man.

**WIZARD:** *Was the move to the new title and doing your own writing a conscious effort to put a new element into the package, to stave off that boredom?*

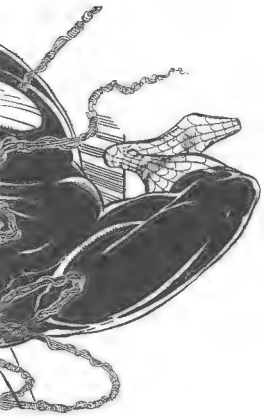
**'Once I pick visually dynam a story**

**McFARLANE:** Yeah. I'd say it was a combination of that and a growing desire to expand the horizons. I'm the kind of person who's pretty fanatical about a lot of things — and my occupation is no different. I think that, by the time I left *Amazing Spider-Man*, my career was pretty much going full-steam. I was up for a couple of awards, I was acknowledged as one of the tops in the field for super-hero comic books. Why coast on that? I always have to find a new challenge. Once people started acknowledging me as a good artist, I needed to find another outlet. I'd conquered that world, so to speak, and I have to keep pushing myself.

**WIZARD:** *Let's talk about your working process. Do you start with a firmly developed plot...or do you just start drawing and have it develop from there?*

**McFARLANE:** I probably wing it more than anybody else in the business right now. Because I made my reputation as an artist, I tend to lean toward that field.

The first thing I consciously think of is a visual: "Who can I bring in as a villain, or what situation can I put the characters in, so the surroundings are a visual, to set a mood?" Even if Spider-Man is saying something wanky, the look has a style to it. Once I pick something I think is visually dynamic, I start to formulate a story around it. I really don't bother with the minute details. I would if I had more time, but I only have four weeks to turn out the whole book. If I had a few extra days, I'm sure the stuff would be a little more... coherent, I guess would be the word. But right now, if I have an extra day, I want to spend it on the art instead of sitting down and doing some big bible on the story.



**something ic, I formulate around it'**

**WIZARD:** *Do you pass at least a rough plot past the editor before you work on it?*

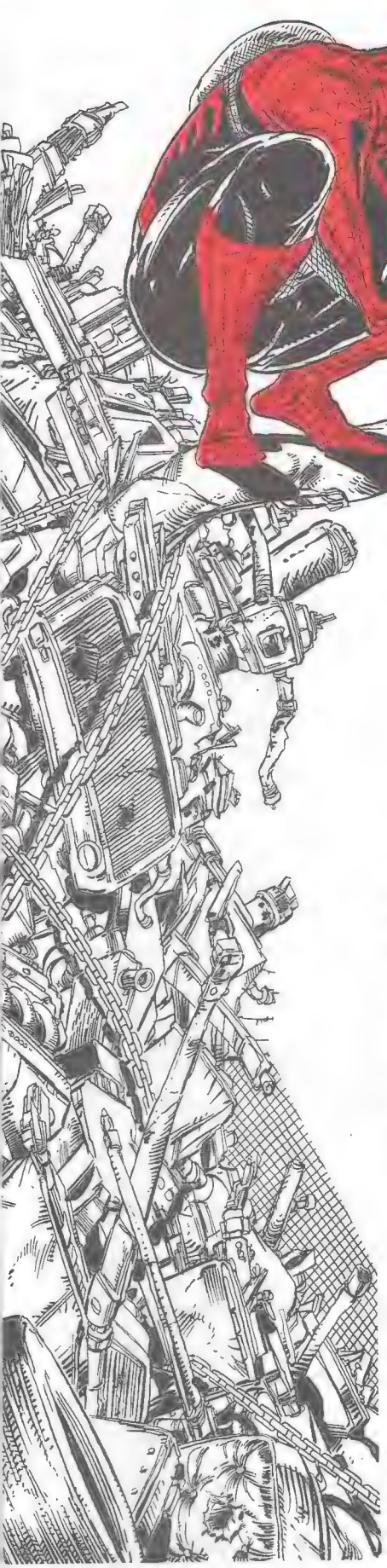
**McFARLANE**: Not as much as he'd like. Sometimes, as a matter of fact, I get going and I hand in a finished issue and forget that the editor never even saw a plot.

I don't do any written plots, usually. I think I've done a couple of paragraphs if I have to bring in a guest star. That's just so it can be cleared with the editor who handles that character. I develop everything in my head; I don't do thumbnail sketches anymore, I don't do cover sketches—it's all sitting in my head and from my head, I can put it straight on paper. To put it on paper more than once—I don't have the time to do that. I've got to cut out steps. There's no sense in my typing out a four-page plot if I already know what I'm going to do.

**WIZARD:** *Looking at your current work, I get the feeling that a lot of the drawing is being done at the inking stage. Am I right?*

**McFARLANE:** It's always been like that. I don't worry about backgrounds, debris, explosions, until I go in with the brush. I rough

**Todd's very first Spider-Man Scripting.**



out the characters, that all. My attitude is there's no such thing as wrong debris, no such thing as wrong spaceships, no such thing as wrong monsters—because there's nothing in real life to base them on. Some guys do better than others... but nobody can say the knob on this fictional gun should be a little more to the left.

If a guy's getting smashed into a brick wall, who cares where the bricks are, as long as there's a shit-load of bricks, right? I don't do a lot of *real* backgrounds. I do a lot of line work and I doodle the hell out of the pages—and the printing process muddies it up some; I treat the pages like they're not going to be

## 'There's no such thing as wrong debris'

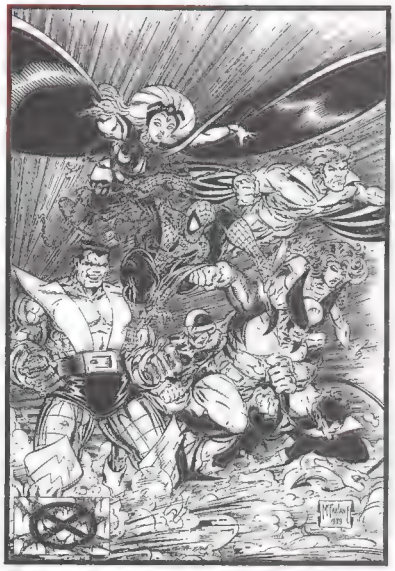
colored. But as long as I get Spider-Man in the right pose and I've got a cool shot of him coming at you in the splash page, it's not that important what's behind him. If I can fill up the space with stuff that kind of, sort of looks right—or at least fill it with linework—the kids figure there's more detail put in than there really is.

**WIZARD:** *The first time I remember seeing your stuff was on Infinity Inc. over at DC. I was impressed by your page design then, playing with border designs and things like that. I don't see that in your work anymore. Have you shifted your attitude toward page design over the years?*

**McFARLANE:** Yeah—you might get a two-part story out of me where I'll go wanky, but my attitude is that the toughest thing for any person doing super-hero comics is to sit on the fence: You can't make it so stylized for the 20 and older crowd that you lose the kids; but you don't want to make it so simple that it's just a kiddie book.

Some of the stuff I was doing on *Infinity*, some of the page design stuff—I still try to do as much design work as I can (sometimes I think I do ten times as much as a lot of other guys), but I can't make it too wacky or that ten-to-fifteen crowd gets a little antsy about the whole look of the book. They only want to work so hard

**TODD'S PORTFOLIO ALSO INCLUDES THE HULK, INFINITY INC., AND INVASION! AMONG OTHERS**



to figure out the comic book. But once you get older, it's kind of neat to have to delve into different layers. I have to make a marriage of both of them so I can get a big audience base.

**WIZARD:** *Assuming that some place down the line, as you said, Spider-Man is no longer enough to keep you occupied, what, in a perfect world, would be Todd McFarlane's next step?*

**McFARLANE:** Unfortunately, once I leave *Spider-Man*, I doubt I'll do monthly comic books again. Part of it is just the grind, part of it is an economical decision. There's no reason for me to take over a monthly title when I could do a special project that would give me greater creative freedom, better reproduction, a bigger PR push. Probably what you'll see me do if and when I leave *Spider-Man* is special projects for a couple of years and then — if I do go back to monthly comics — I'll self-publish. If I'm going to work day in and day out, I'll do it for myself. ✪

**An example of Todd's early page design from Coyote #11 by Epic Comics.**

# a short history of:

by Greg McElhatton

With those words on the cover of *Amazing Fantasy* #15 in August 1962, Stan Lee and Steve Ditko created a new super-hero, one that would rock the comics industry with its longevity and appeal.

Spider-Man was originally Peter Parker, a high school student you wouldn't look at twice — until that fateful day when, as he was working in a lab, he was bitten by a radioactive spider. It wasn't until later that day that Peter discovered the ramifications of this event. He found that he had been gifted with some attributes of a spider — he could stick to walls and had the proportionate strength of a spider as well!

Peter created "web shooters" for himself and decided to use his new-found powers to get money for his Aunt May and Uncle Ben, who had reared him since childhood. He went to a wrestling tournament calling himself Spider-Man and beat his opponent. However, when an escaped criminal ran by him later, he watched the felon get away. When asked why, he responded that it wasn't his job to catch criminals.

A few days later, tragedy struck. Peter returned home to find that his Uncle Ben had been murdered by a criminal. Peter tracked down the killer only to discover it was the same one he had let escape earlier. At that moment, Peter made a vow to use his powers as Spider-Man to fight crime. And so a super-hero was born.

## SPIDEY'S VILEST VILLAINS

# SPIDEY'S ILLUSTRATED EVOLUTION

**1960's**
**STEVE DITKO**

**1970's**
**JOHN ROMITA, SR.**

**1990's**
**TODD McFARLANE**

Since then, Spider-Man, or Spidey as he is known, has gone through many ups and downs in his personal life. His rogue's gallery is extensive, with many of his foes becoming some of the most popular villains today. He's faced such enemies as Doctor Octopus, who has four mechanical arms grafted to him; the Green Goblin, with his exploding pumpkin bombs; Kraven, a hunter who chose Spider-Man as his prey; and Venom, an alien creature that Spidey once wore as his costume only to have it try and take him over!

His personal life has also had its ups and downs. His first true love, Gwen Stacy, was killed by the original Green Goblin. He once went out with the Black Cat, only to break it up because of her amoral personality. And yet, through it all, he had a roller-coaster relationship with Mary Jane Watson, one that finally concluded with their happy marriage, complete with a wedding dress designed by Willi Smith.

Spider-Man's powers themselves have even gone through changes. He had six arms for a short period and once had a living outfit that created its own web and could change into normal clothing. His strength has been upgraded throughout the years. And for a brief time, Spider-Man was the most powerful hero on Earth, with the cosmic powers of Captain Universe!

Yet some things have almost never changed. He's still a photographer for the *Daily Bugle*. Aunt May is always there for him. And while he's graduated from high school, he's now in college.

With four titles plus a reprint title, Spider-Man continues to be a big name in comics. Why do people enjoy reading about him so much? Perhaps it's because, despite all his powers, he's still just one of us. ✪

**PETER'S FAVORITE FEMALES.**

TM & © 1991 DC Comics, Inc.

# OMEGA MEN #3

**Release Date:** June 1983
**Artist:** Keith Giffen
**Writer:** Roger Slifer

From the pages of a comic, found in boxes marked 5 for $1.00, springs one of the hottest characters of the 90's, LOBO! That's right, DC's newest sensation made his debut in this obscure title, and nine years later has become one of the hottest books in the country.

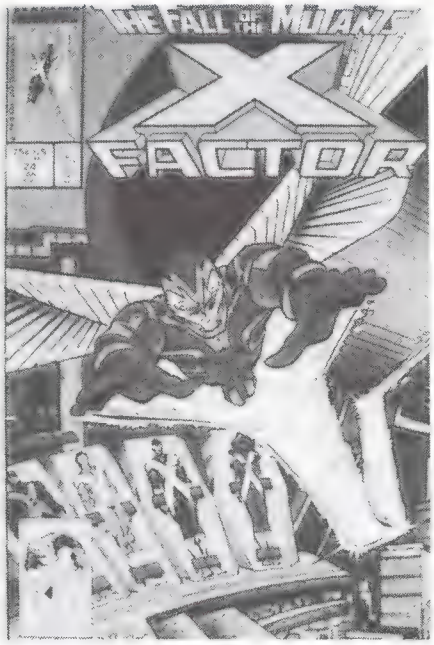
Lobo began a minor comeback in 1988 by appearing in *Justice League International #18-21*, and later appearances in the Superman titles. Futher exposure came from the pages of *L.E.G.I.O.N '89* (later renamed '90 and '91) when he joined the group. His jump start to super stardom occured last year when Lobo's 4 issue mini-series hit the shelves. Lobo has become a solid seller for DC Comics. Lobo has made numerous appearances in *Demon* and *Legion of Super Heroes*, since the mini-series. DC Comics has planned more solo Lobo projects futher down the road, to satify our thirst for punishment.

For more information on Lobo's past past, check out *Omega Men #3, 5*, and *7*. In the meantime, *Omega Men #3* is a great addition to any comic book collection.

WHADDYA 'WAITIN' FOR, AN INVITATION?
- LOBO -

# X-FACTOR #24

**Release Date:** January 1988
**Artist:** Walt Simonson
**Writer:** Louise Simonson

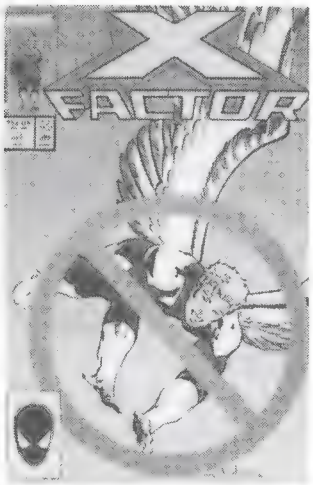



TM & © 1991 Marvel Ent. Group, Inc.

With *X-Factor #24*, the Simonson's took a grade "B" character, the Angel (a.k.a. Warren Worthington III), and transformed him into what is sure to be one of the 1990's hottest characters, ARCHANGEL!

In recent years, Super Heroes have been getting excessively more dark and violent (i.e. Ghost Rider, Lobo, Wolverine, Punisher, etc...) now, this "angel of death" fits the bill. This grim, evil looking, and razor tipped winged hero is going to appeal to fans instantly. This "angel of death" will be getting even more exposure as one of the new members in Marvel's expanded X-Men team. Archangel will soon become a real superstar, and *X-Factor #24* will soon be very hard to find.

TM & © 1991 Marvel Ent. Group, Inc.




X-Factor:TM & © 1991 Marvel

**Here are some other X-Factor books to watch out for.**

# DIGITAL COLOR

***DC Comics colorists have a new tool, replacing their brushes and Dr. Martin's Dyes with keyboards and mouses.***

## BY HENRY C. COLONNA III

Computers are best known for enhancing the efficiency of humans through relieving people of repetitive chores, and doing those repetitive chores much more efficiently. More recently computers have been put to use in the arts for their ability to manipulate images and colors. DC Comics has been using a computer system for colorizing many of their comics.

Traditionally comics have been colored and separated by hand. A printing size copy of the art is made and a colorist, using special water-colors called Dr. Martin's Dyes, creates a guide for the color separator. That guide is then sent to the separator, where technicians cut film to match the guide, creating three separate versions of the page — one in red (or magenta), one in blue (or cyan), and one in yellow. DC's computer system automates that entire process, creating the final camera film, from the guide the colorist creates on-screen.

The TSR comic line and the mature readers line use the computer coloring system to full advantage. For example, in the second issue of *Spelljammer*, there is a stunning depiction of a prismatic wall spell shown as a tight wavy rainbow of colors, an extraordinarily unique image. The computer creates eerie multi-colored alien skies that fade between many shades of grey and black. This effect of the computer is the most impressive — the infinite palette of the computer system, and precision control over the colors allows the computer to fade very gradually between one color and another. When madness is in the sky in an issue of *Shade*, a mature readers offering from DC, there is a gradual change between yellow and purple. It's easy to see the purple at the top of a panel and the yellow at the bottom, but it is impossible to draw a distinct line to separate the gradual fades from red to orange.

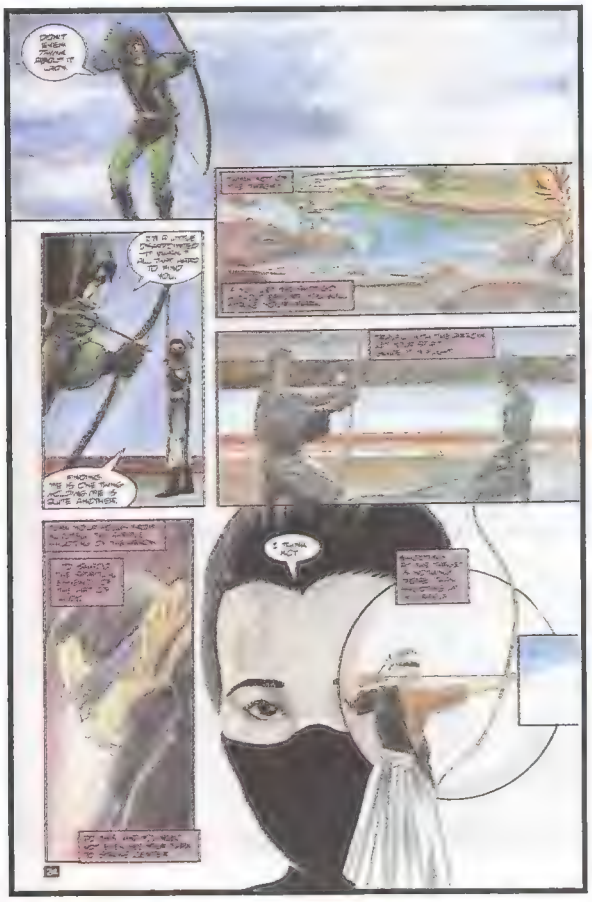
Computers also allow for quick and easy experimentation. It is much easier for DC's colorists to apply colors to see how they look, and to experiment and change the colors quickly. Although DC's production director, Bob Rozakis, would not go into great detail on the exact process, it would be logical to assume that, especially in some of the special-effect scenes in the TSR comics, or the unusual places that the mature readers titles visit, that the computer is allowed to randomly generate colors, or perhaps generate an effect between a given range of colors.

The computer in no way eliminates or replaces human colorists, but is a powerful tool in their hands. The colorist controls the process and makes decisions about the colors and shades, and can accept, reject, or modify the computer's output. DC gives full credit to the person and does not even mention the use of the computer in the comics' credits.

Harvey Comics is also using computers in its production process, though primarily for digital storage of black-and-white art. The Harvey system permits the production department to reduce costs for its large inventory of pages and for reprinting with "updates". Harvey's reprints are also computer-colored, but published accounts of the process suggest it is not as elaborate as DC's system.

Computer technology has arrived as a powerful tool for comic creators. Through the infinite palette and ability to quickly experiment and re-adjust colors, the computer allows for many more possibilities for what the reader sees. Advances such as these will continue to keep the comic book an exciting, progressive and changing art form.

***In order to highlight this article, we present 3 examples of the primary coloring methods.*** **AT RIGHT:** *the traditional method, 50 years old and still used for most comics. Three films are manually cut for each page, offering a limited palette of colors.* **LOWER LEFT:** *The 1980's introduced fully painted comics like* **Green Arrow: The Longbow Hunters.** *Each page is an actual painting, which is scanned as a color photograph, and printed.* **LOWER RIGHT:** *The 1990's has brought us computerized coloring, used for* **Shade: The Changing Man.** *The color artist creates effects on-screen and the computer outputs color-separated negatives.*



# COLLECTING COMICS IN THE 90'S

Comic book collecting is fun, fun for everyone. In comic books anything can happen, and does in some cases. Just when you saw your favorite character die a bloody death, he/she (it?) comes back, with a vengeance, no less.

Everyone collects for their own reason, to make money, they enjoy the reading, like the artwork, a way to relax, and many more. Here we will point out some of the most popular ways of collecting comics. We will also talk about trends you should look for over the next six months. We're sure you have a collecting strategy, so let's compare.

The first type of collecting we call "**Character Collecting**", whereby the comics you collect have the same character throughout. A person who collects like this will try to purchase all the appearances of this character, going back to their 1st appearance, their origin, a good fight, etc... (if your budget allows). This is great way to start and continue collecting. A easy way to find a character to follow is by asking your friends or hobby shop salesperson what they recommend given your tastes.

The second mode, increasing in popularity daily, is "**Artist Collecting**". Whereby you collect books of the artist you like. Artwork has always been the biggest selling point of a book, and if you like the artist, you'll collect the book. Some artist have many titles under their belt, so to start collecting all of their work may be difficult, time consuming, and expensive. You might want to collect special issues that the artist has done, issue which include their 1st work, the 1st appearance or origin of character, a death, a good splash page, or basically a very pivotal issue. If you hear of a new up-and-coming artist, great, start collecting. Some titles with great artists sell as many as a couple of million issues a year.

The next mode of collecting is similar to "Artist Collecting", but applies to writers, called "**Writer Collecting**". Writers are little harder to follow, because their recognition is not visual. Since their styles may vary it might not be apparent at first glance. However, there are many comics with table turning plots that just can't be drawn to show exactly what happened, therefore, a very skillful writer is needed to coordinate the plot with the illustration. Very recently some artists are trying their skills at plotting and writing. Only time will tell if this is a "good" thing.

The collecting fun really kicks into gear when you combine a few or all of the elements we mentioned earlier. When you put a popular artist and character together, you've got yourself a winner. An artist/writer combination will also produce the same results.

Recently, a whole new dimension to collecting comics has just surfaced, we call it "**Creative Printing**", whereby a publisher will use out of the ordinary printing methods to produce a comic book. The results have been staggering, with sales doubling and hobby shops nationwide selling out in minutes. One of the most popular methods is using a metallic ink like gold or silver. This will really grab your attention at first glance. Embossing is also a neat feature, combined with metallic ink, the books going to second print. Gatefold covers, which combine a few self-contained pieces of art placed side-by-side to create one larger, more spectacular piece, has been very well received.

"**Creative Marketing**" has also taken roots in the comic book industry. Examples of these are bagging comics (which was really intended, basically, to protect the comic while shipping), inserting trading cards, and multiple covers for one issue. Variations in comics that are also very "collectworthy" are test logos (which had a very limited distribution), newsstand vs direct copies (with or without a U.P.C, short for Universal Product Code), limited productions, and finally changing colors on covers for second prints.

These creative proccesses cannot work alone. They must be combined with elements mentioned earlier, that attract collectors to begin with. Just putting a special cover on piece of junk will not work.

Over the next 6 months, the comic book industry will grow tremendously. There will be a few major factors, when combined, which will create a huge market.

The movie industry has grown to be the #1 source for entertainment. With this in mind, the big publishers have been investing a lot of time and effort into reaping the benefits of this multi-billion dollar business. There are many movie projects in the works based upon comic book characters, and they're coming soon to a theater near you!

The television networks have quite a few cartoons and shows planned for their line-ups. Again this will bring comic book characters into homes across the country. A few big publishers have television commercial slots already planned.

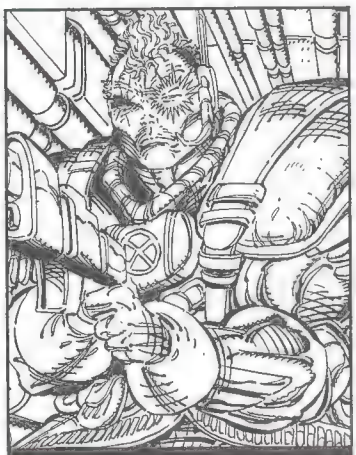
Sports cards have become the largest, non-television advertised, hobby in every part of the country. These same sports card companies are producing trading cards for the comic book industry. Comic book cards may soon be #2.

All these tie-ins to comic books and characters will propel the comic industry to new heights. All these tie-ins will draw many new readers and collectors into the industry. With all these new collectors trying find 1st appearances, origin issues, and important works of artists, you make the call!

With all this information about comic book collecting, you could be well on your way to a successful collecting career.

# WIZARD'S TOP 10

We keep a very close watch on all the hottest books trading hands throughout the country. Here we have listed for you the 10 most commonly sold and demanded comics. This page will set you ablaze!



CABLE TRADING CARD

## 1 Title: *X-FORCE #1*

Artist & Writer: ROB LIEFELD

With little surprise, Rob Liefeld's **X-Force #1** is the **HOTTEST** book in the country. This comic book has been very well received. Of the five different trading cards available, the Cable card is the most popular. Collecting the set of cards creates another whole dimension to this comic. Inorder to create a complete set of Marvel trading cards, series 2, you will need these five extra cards.

It's official, *X-FORCE #1* is now the #1 best selling comic book of all time . . . But, the sales figures for *X-Men #1* might re-write history.

## 2 Title: *X-MEN #248*

Artist: JIM LEE
Writer: CHRIS CLAREMONT

Jim Lee's first work on the **X-Men** title. With Lee's new **X-Men #1**, there will certainly be a challenge for the number one spot. Next month can Liefeld's **X-Force** stay on top? We'll see.

## 3 Title: *SILVER SURFER #50* (1st Print)

Artist: RON LIM
Writer: JIM STARLIN

This book continues to shine. The popularity of this silver embossed comic book remains strong due to the Infinity Gauntlet mini series. Ron Lim is certainly making his stars brilliant.

## 4 Title: *X-FACTOR #63*

Artist: WHILCE PORTACIO
Writer: WHILCE PORTACIO

With Whilce Portacio taking on the writing chores of **X-Men #281**, his first work on **X-Factor** (closely tied-in with **X-Men**), has rocketed up the charts.

## 5 Title: *SPIDER-MAN #1* (Platinum)

Artist: TODD McFARLANE
Writer: TODD McFARLANE

This scarce version of **Spider-Man #1** was only given to retailers as a thank you for the tremendous sales of **Spider-Man #1**. This book continues to be a very sought after collector's edition.

## 6 Title: *NEW MUTANTS #87*

The first appearance of Cable, EVER ! This Liefeld book is a key book in anyone's collection.What potential, 'nuff said.

## 7 Title: *SILVER SURFER #34*

Jim Starlin debuts as writer and Thanos returns from the dead.This is a key issue in the **Silver Surfer** line.

## 8 Title: *GHOST RIDER #15*

Ghost Rider vs. Johnny Blaze, What more could you want? This book is even better with the lights out.

## 9 Title: *NEW TEEN TITANS #2*

1st appearance of hot DC character Deathstroke the Terminator.This issue is tough to find, but well worth the search.

## 10 Title: *NEW MUTANTS #100* (1st Print)

Last issue of the series and the first appearance of the #1 Title, X-Force. This Liefeld book will age very gracefully.

In today's comic book market, grade is one of the most important factors that influences the value of a comic book. There are many grades that fall between the ones listed below; however, the grades presented here are the ones with the most noticeable signs of

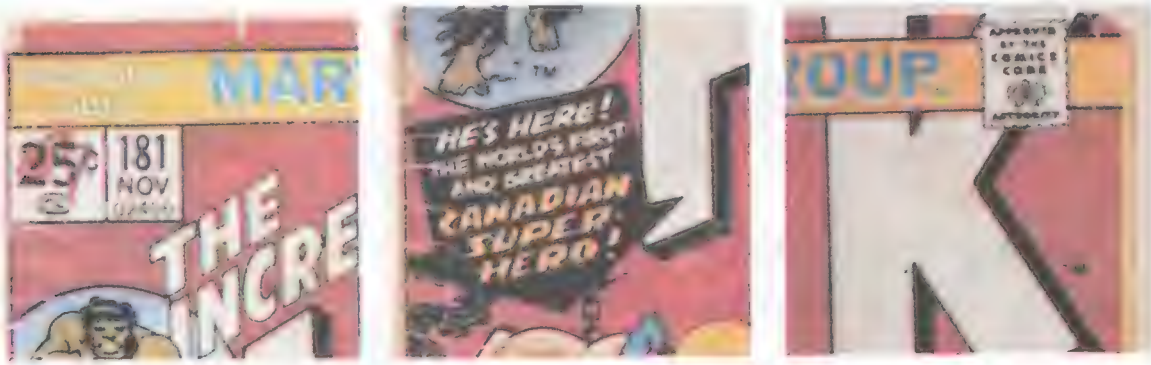
MINT: By definition, a mint comic book should appear as if it just came off the press, flawless. There should be no signs of wear inside or outside of the issue. The cover should be centered, spine should be very tight (no creases), and all corners should be sharp. The pages inside should not show any signs of aging. A MINT comic book could be worth upto 200% of the NEAR MINT value. This all depends on the scarcity and desireability of the specific comic in high grade. Most newer (70's to present) issues in Mint condition are usually valued upto 120% of NEAR MINT.

NEAR MINT: A comic book in this grade is very close to MINT. Usually, there is only one small imperfection that will keep this book from being MINT. One of these flaws may be, a cover that is slightly off center, one corner may be slightly rounded, or the spine is very tight with one tiny crease. The pages inside should show almost no signs of aging or wear, with a bright and glossy cover. The comic books listed in this guide are valued at NEAR MINT prices.

VERY FINE: A comic book in this condition will show some minor signs of aging and wear. The spine will have few slight creases, the corners might not all be sharp, and the color may have lost a little luster. There should be no folds, cuts, or markings in any way, on any of the pages. The comics in this grade are valued at 50% to 70% of the NEAR MINT value, again depending on the scarcity and demand for the specific issue.

changes in condition. Grading comics vary from person to person depending on how much they regard certain flaws or imperfections. This guide will serve to help you in the process of grading your comics.

FINE: This comic book is a good example of a well read comic. The cover may show some minor flaking, the spine shows noticeable signs of wear, pages have slightly discolored - showing signs of age, and the corners are rounded. An issue in this condition may have a slightly loose cover, especially around the staples. Although there are still no pages with cuts, folds, or missing totally. A FINE comic book will usually be valued at 30% to 50% of the NEAR MINT value.




GOOD/VERY GOOD: Comics in this range will have very noticeable signs of aging and wear. There will be spine creases, rounded corners, very minor cuts or tears, minor marks (writing), and faded colors. There shouldn't be any chunks missing. This is a very common grade for older comics. Comics in GOOD/VERY GOOD condition are valued from 10% to 30% of the NEAR MINT values.

POOR: A comic book in this condition has many defects. Some possible flaws include ripped pages, a bent spine, a small chunk missing, large creases, and very discolored or faded pages. Any comic with unnatural defects are usually considered POOR. Examples include water damage, rusty staples, tape marks, cut out coupons, missing complete pages, writing marks, or stains. A POOR comic is worth less than 10% of the NEAR MINT value.

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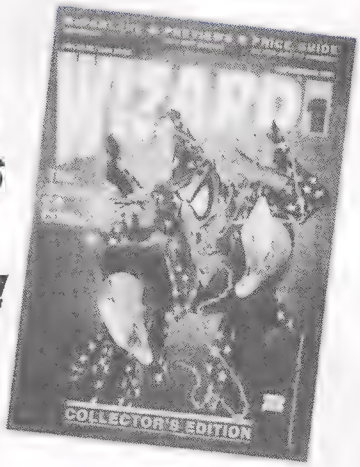


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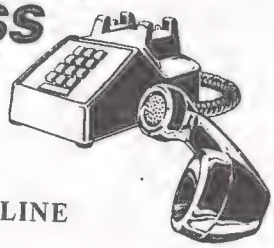

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SEPTEMBER

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X-FORCE 1992 CALENDAR — MC6258 (R. Liefeld)
X-MEN 1992 CALENDAR — MC6259 (J. Lee)

X-FORCE — MC6260 (R. Liefeld)
X-MEN — MC6261 (J. Lee)

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Rob Liefeld and Boris Vallejo have agreed to autograph 1000 specially printed cards each to be inserted randomly in a special run of their respective trading card series. **suggested retail: X-FORCE by Rob Liefeld 59¢ - 79¢/pack**

Boris Fantasy Cards by Boris Vallejo

These autographed cards will be available only in specially marked boxes ordered at this time. These collectibles are sure to be a hit with fans, so stock up now.

1991 Boris Vallejo

BORIS AUTOGRAPHED CARDS — BE6262 (B. Vallejo)
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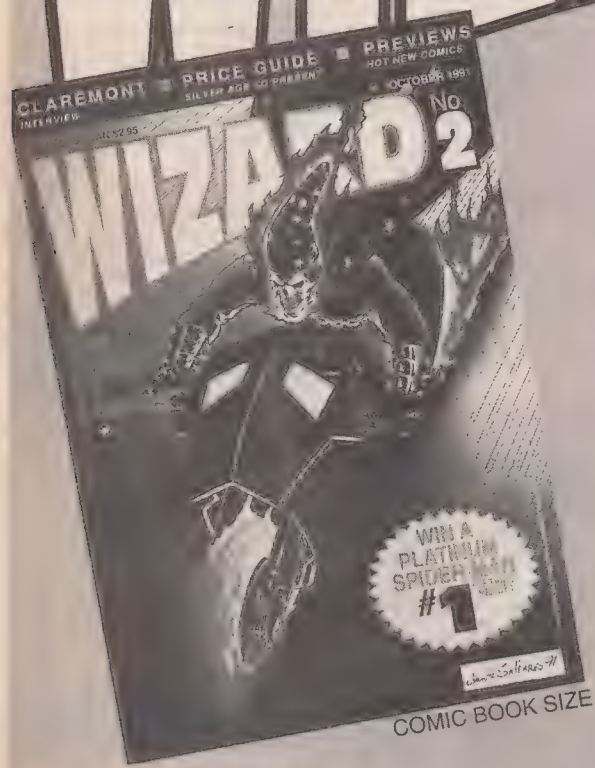


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WIZARD

# HORROR COMICS

## THEN . . . and NOW!

## INSIDE:

*Read about:*

*SWAMP THING*

*THE SANDMAN*

*HELLBLAZER*

*AND THE CLASSIC E.C. HORROR COMICS OF THE "PRE-CODE" 1950'S*

*AND OF COURSE: LOTS OF BLOOD!*

# HORR

**by Lawrence Watt-Evans**

In recent years, some of DC's most successful and critically-acclaimed comic books have been on the borderline of horror—titles like *Sandman*, *Swamp Thing*, and *Hellblazer*. They're among the most sophisticated comics on the market today.

Forty years ago, the most sophisticated comics were EC's New Trend titles, all of them at least tinged with horror — *Tales From the Crypt*, *Vault of Horror*, *Haunt of Fear*, *Crime Suspenstories*, *Shock Suspenstories*, *Weird Science*, and *Weird Fantasy*.

***They spawned scores of imitators, and are so admired that they're still being reprinted in various formats today.***

How do the two lines compare? Well, first off, there are some very obvious differences. The EC line was created in imitation of radio suspense programs, like *Lights Out*, and consisted entirely of anthology titles, without recurring characters (except for the hosts who introduced the stories), and without continuing storylines. Each issue contained four stories — one eight pages, one six pages, and two of seven pages each. Each of those stories stood alone.

The DC titles, on the other hand, evolved out of superhero comics. All of them focus on a single central character, at least most of the time, and generally only run one story — or *part* of a story — per issue. Continuity is sometimes very important — recent issues of *Swamp Thing* must be incomprehensible to someone who doesn't already know the

character and situation. Almost any EC story could be taken totally out of context and still be fully appreciated (there were a very few gimmicky ones that related to something else), while a story like "Quest for the Elementals IV" makes no sense at all without a pretty solid grounding in who and what the Swamp Thing is, where the Parliament of Trees came from, and so on.

*Hellblazer* can also lose a new reader pretty quickly. *Sandman* does a better job, perhaps because the central concept is simpler and more powerful, but even there, the multi-part epics like "Season of Mists" are a long way from a six-page shock story in *Tales From the Crypt.*

## 'These are not comforting stories for children'

***Then why try to compare them?***

Because there are similarities. And perhaps looking at those, and seeing *why* these two lines are the best of their respective eras, will give us some insight into what makes a good comic book.

The most obvious similarity is that both lines focus on horror and the supernatural — on mood, as much as action. The stories are aiming at an emotion a little subtler than the excitement of a good punch-'em-up. Not necessarily a lot subtler — the gag reflex is a reasonable response to some of EC's stories. Still, the stories are a little cooler, a little more thoughtful, than straight action epics. It goes with the territory in horror or suspense.

# HERE'S A LISTING OF THE HOTTEST BOOKS SHIPPING IN AUGUST

## CHRIS & JIM'S X-CELLENT ADVENTURE

**TITLE: X-MEN #1**
**Writer:** Chris Claremont & Jim Lee
**Artist:** Jim Lee
**Cover Price:** $1.50, 5th Version $3.95

Claremont, Lee and Williams, Marvel's mutant megastars, will move over to the most eagerly awaited project in years: The all new *X-Men #1*. With the former X-Factor team added to the original group once again, everyone realizes that there are just too many heroes for one team. Cyclops becomes field leader of the group that will star in this new title, which also features Wolverine, Psylocke, Beast, Gambit and Rogue. And, as he did in 1963, Magneto plans world conquest. Can the new team stop him or will the Master of Magnetism reign supreme?

To add to the mutated excitement, *X-Men #1* will have four different covers, each released a week apart. A fifth version with all four covers in a double-gatefold will be released the first week of September. *That* one will be a limited edition with no reorders.

Magneto:TM & © 1991 Marvel

# BATMAN FACES A HOLY TERROR

**TITLE: BATMAN: HOLY TERROR**
**Writer:** Alan Brennert
**Artist:** Norm Breyfogle
**Cover Price:** $4.95

Following on the success of *Gotham By Gaslight*, which based its story on a Batman in the Victorian era, this one-shot prestige format title is the first in a series called "ELSEWORLDS". By placing Batman in different settings and time periods, there can be a multitude of stories told without having the comic continuity.

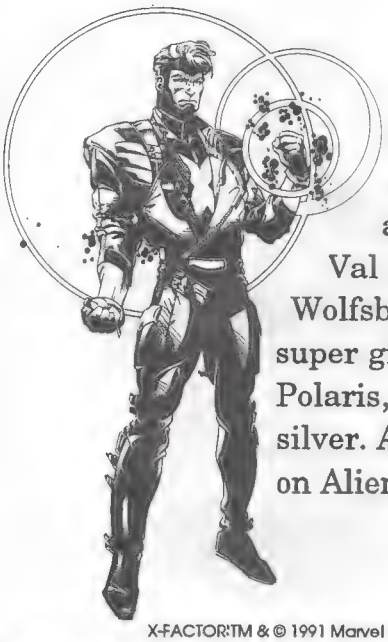
In the first one-shot, we find ourselves in an alternate present, where church and state are one. Bruce Wayne, before entering the priesthood, uncovers the truth about his parents' death. With this terrible secret revealed, a new darker Batman emerges as Gotham's Protective Dark Knight.

COVER FROM HOLY TERROR

© 1991 DC Comics Inc.

# IS THAT A FACT?

**TITLE: X-FACTOR #71**
**Writer:** Peter David
**Artist:** Stroman & Milgrom
**Cover Price:** $1.00



Peter David, fan-favorite writer of the *Incredible Hulk* and recently DC's *Star Trek* title, takes the reigns of a mutant title, as Cyclops, Professor X, and FBI agent Val Cooper journey to Genosha to retrieve Havok and Wolfsbane, forming the core of a new government-sponsored super group: the "New" X-Factor. The team will consist of Polaris, Jamie Madrox, Strong Guy (AKA Guido) and Quicksilver. Art is by Larry Stroman, last seen gaining fan approval on Alien Legion.

X-FACTOR:TM & © 1991 Marvel

# THE SWORD IS DRAWN . . . AGAIN!

COVER FROM EXCALIBER #42

© 1991 Marvel

**TITLE: EXCALIBER #42**
**Writer/Artist:** Alan Davis
**Cover Price:** $1.75

*Excalibur #42* marks the issue fans have been waiting for, for close to two years, the return of Alan Davis! Davis starts with a bang as Excalibur is disbanded, bringing back Gatecrasher, and putting Captain Britain on trial for the death of a child killed in one of his battles. More of Meggan's secrets are revealed and the Goddess Roma tells the team the 'real' reason they were brought together. This issue begins a bi-weekly run.

# GOTHAM'S GHETTO HAS A CHILLING NEW DEFENDER FEAR THE RAGMAN

**TITLE: RAGMAN #1**
**Writer:** Robert Flemming
**Artist:** Pat Broderick
**Cover Price:** $1.50

Rory Regan, the "other" caped crusader of Gotham City, returns to comics in this eight-issue mini-series. *Ragman* was created by Bob Kanigher and Joe Kubert in 1976, and now 15 years later, *Ragman* tells the story of a neighborhood drained of hope and full of fear and despair. Can the Ragman and his seemingly evil powers make a difference here?

RAGMAN #1

© 1991 DC Comics Inc.

# TERMINATOR: SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

## MECHANICAL MAYHEM MEXICAN STYLE

**TITLE: TERMINATOR: SECONDARY OBJECTIVES #2 OF 4**
**Writer:** James Robinson
**Artist:** Paul Goldan/Karl Kesel
**Cover Price:** $2.50

"I'll BE BACK"" and they are. In part 2 of this smash sequel, the new female Terminator (Z000,M) has arrivd upon the L.A. shore after travelling 400 miles across the ocean floor, and she's NOT happy! Meanwhile, Sarah Connor tries to escape to Mexico with Terminator (890L) hot on her trail. All this while Dudley, the half human/half terminator creature struggles with his machine side.

© 1991 Carolco

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# PICKS FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT

### Judge Dredd: Tale of the Deadman
Fleetway/Quality

NOT A HOAX! NOT AN IMAGINARY TALE! JUDGE DREDD QUITS!! Its true- Dredd, disgusted with the Justice Department, resigns. He sets off into the radioactive cursed Earth. Prelude to the forthcoming *Necropolis* Graphic Novel.

### L.E.G.I.O.N. '91 #32
DC Comics

There's good news and bad news for Lobo. The good news: he gets to interrogate a captured Khund soldier HIS WAY. The bad news: the galaxy's greatest assassin has just been hired to kill Lobo. Bad news for whom?

### Legion of Superheroes #23
DC Comics

In part 3 of the "Quiet Darkness" saga, Lobo and Darkseid continue their unstoppable slaughter of the Legion. Sequel to "the Great Darkness Saga" from a few years back.

### Mask #1 of 4
Dark Horse

Non-stop manic mayhem! The city is full of crime and corruption. A zany masked vigilante is on a one man rampage to eliminate crime with his own brand of lunatic justice.

### Namor #19
Marvel

Namor vs Super Skrull, guest starring the "Punisher." Artwork and writing done by John Byrne.

### New Warriors #16
Marvel

Uh-Oh! Terrax the Tamer is back and is he upset! Last time it took the whole New Warriors team to take him out, what hope does Nova have all by himself? Guest starring the Fantastic Four.

### NFL Superpro #1
Marvel

Regular series premiere, Spider-Man guest stars! Art by Jose Delbo and writing by Fabian Nicieza.

### The Psycho #1 of 3
DC Comics

The story deals with a world where super powered agents work for the government, and one normal agent is forced to join the team. Writer James Hudnall is the author of last years *Lex Luthor: The Unauthorized Biography.*

### Punisher: P.O.V. #4 of 4
Marvel

Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D. guest star as the threat of DEKE is over, but a new one is born in the sewers of New York. Final issue of the smash four issue mini series.

### Shield #28
Marvel

Part 2 of the 3 part **Wolverine** appearance.

### Silver Surfer #57
Marvel

Artist Ron Lim. After the universe shattering events in the Infinity Gauntlet, the Surfer finds himself sucked into a black hole and transported into the distant past, where he encounters Firelord and Drax!

### Sleepwalker #5
Marvel

Can even Spider-Man help the Sleepwalker defeat the vicious new ganglord Ringleader? Guest starring the Kingpin. Part 1 of 2.

### Solar, Man of the Atom #4
Valiant

Pencilled and inked by Barry Windsor-Smith. The shocking climax of "Second Death." And part 4 of the origin of Solar. This is a companion series to Valiant's already successful revival of Gold Key's Magnus, *Robot Fighter*.

### Spider-Man #15
Marvel

Artist/Writer: **Todd McFarlane.** All humor issue, as Todd and Impossible Man poke fun at the new *X-Men* book.

### All New From TOUCHMARK

Disney Publishing's new line of sophisticated, cutting edge comics and graphic novels (all titles will be shipping later this year).

#### Enigma #1 of 8
What would the smartest man in the worlds do for kicks? A little bit of meta-physics, with super hero parody.

#### Mercy (one shot)
Painted soft cover graphic novel by the artist of *Books of Magic #4*, Paul Johnson. A real slice of life. The book deals with the spiritual entity of Mercy and the interaction with three people in various ways.

#### Sebastian O #1 of 3
Written by Grant Morrison, and drawn by Steve Yeowell. The decadence of the 1890's. What if there were computers in the Victorian Age?

### X-Force #3
Marvel

**Cables young charges collide with one of the X-Men's deadlies foes, the Juggernaut. Can the young team rescue former teammate Sunspot from the clutches of this unbeatable villain?**

# Celebrating 10 Years Of Success!

Not much in comics lasts ten years. Publishers come and go, favorite titles get cancelled and cover prices increase regularly. It seems that very few things in comics have any real staying power.

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Westfield Comics has delivered 10 years of uninterrupted, excellent service. Not many comic services can make that claim. Some may offer better discounts or flashy specials, but they never seem to be around very long. Westfield is there, every month, providing the best comic service around. And we'll be there tomorrow, next year and for years after that.

The secret to Westfield's longevity is **simplicity.** Because the world of comics is a very confusing place, we do everything we can to make comic collecting easier and fun! First, we send you our easy-to-use order form each month. With this form, you only order and pay for what you want - no standing draws and no "bank accounts." Second, everything on our order form is discounted at least 25%! And you save even more with our sliding quantity discounts - up to 35% off!

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"Your service is impeccable."
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"In the last five years, I've had trouble with cars, school, girlfriends, etc... but not my comic book service! I'm confident that your high standard of service will not change."
—**Bob Mroczek**, Burbank, IL

"I would be TOTALLY LOST without Westfield."
—**James M. Talbot**, Everett, MA

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# Rocketeering On Screen

**Actor Bill Campell dons the helmet and rocket pack to play Dave Steven's comic-book hero in this summer's blockbuster film.**

*by Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

One of the top movies for this summer is *The Rocketeer*, Disney's action-adventure film based on Dave Stevens' comic-book feature. Cast in the title role is Bill Campbell. The Charlottesville, Virginia native studied acting in Chicago, after leaving an aspiring career as — of all things — a comic book artist!

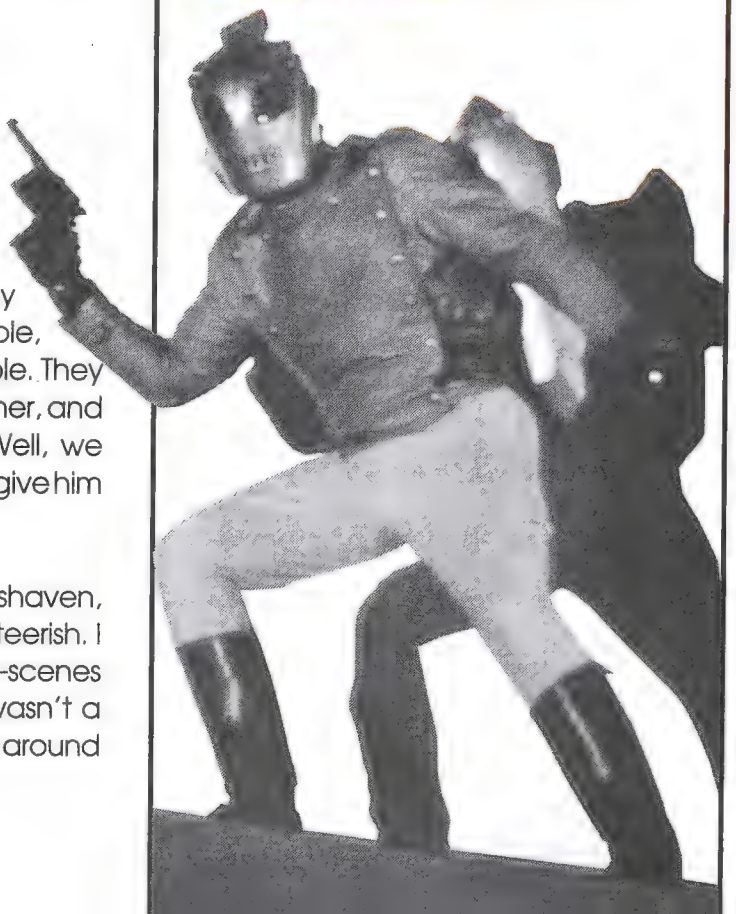
Campbell says getting the part as Rocketeer Cliff Secord was pretty standard Hollywood stuff. "It was a fairly routine thing for me," he recalls. "I went to a reading, then a test, then another test. It was a fairly long process—between the reading and my first test was a huge period of time. I just figured it had gone away...." But it hadn't, he discovered. "They tested so many people, read so many people, that everything just took a long time. The first time I read for the part, I met (director) Joe Johnston. I had just finished working at the Renaissance Fair down in Orange County, doing Shakespeare, and I had a beard and long hair. They looked at me when I walked in like they thought I was the janitor who had strolled into the wrong room. And I was terribly self-conscious.

But, then, they called me back in for the test," Campbell continues. "I heard they called me back in for the test because they had to round out the day —they were testing two other people, but they couldn't *just* test two people. They had to round out the day with another, and Joe picked my name off a list. 'Well, we haven't seen him in a long time, let's give him a shot.'

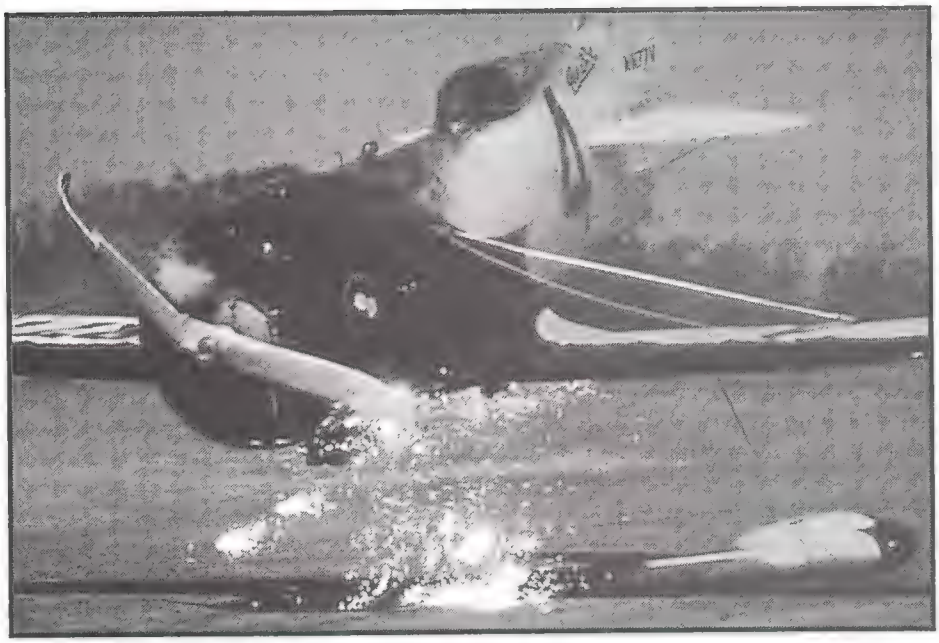
So, I came back in, I was clean-shaven, and looking a lot more Rocketeerish. I don't know what all the behind-the-scenes things were. I *do* know I certainly wasn't a favorite at first, but things sort of swung around my way."

Although he wears the helmet and rocket pack for a good deal of the film, and spent some time on wires to film flying scenes, Campbell says the most frightening flying he did for *The Rocketeer* was in a plane.

The racing plane I fly in the film, the GB, only has one cockpit, so they couldn't do any filming *in* the GB in the air," he points out. "So they mocked up the end of a three-cockpit biplane to look like the GB. They put a canopy on the back cockpit, they stuck a camera in the middle cockpit, pointing back, to me in the last cockpit, and a pilot in the front cockpit. We took off and flew around Santa Maria, California, doing a lot of low-level passes and turning around the corners of buildings and stuff.



*Bill Campbell (in full Rocketeer regalia) springs off the screen this summer.*



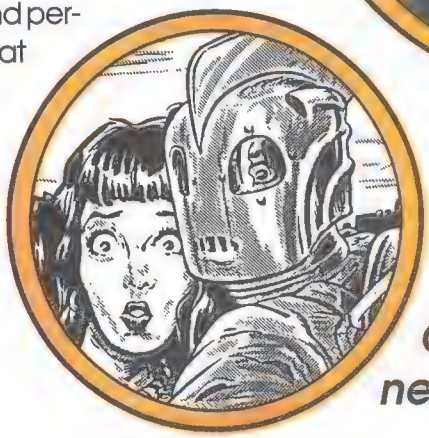
Our pilot, Craig Hoskings, is probably one of the better pilots in the country," Campbell goes on. "Even so, he said he was counting the number of times he had to fly the GB. That tiny little plane was so squirrely that he was afraid that, sooner or later, his time was gonna come."

Campbell said the frightening part of his flight in the mock-up was the stunt work. "The shooting we were doing mainly took place during the time when I was supposed to be in trouble in the GB—when it takes a bullet hit," he says. "Craig is up there doing his level best to make it look as if I was crashing — which meant flying around the countryside about ten feet over the treetops, wiggling and wobbling, and threading between things, making low-level passes over the runway."

Campbell has nothing but praise for his co-star, Jennifer Connelly, who plays Jenny (Betty in the comics). He calls the resemblance between Connelly and her comic-book counterpart remarkable.

Jennifer Connelly transcends stunning," he says. "What's more, her physical beauty would be absolutely unimportant if she weren't such a great all-around person. The real beauty of her is that she's just such a nice person.

And physically, she's pretty much right there," he continues. "You would think that Dave had based his Betty on her. The likeness is that uncanny.



***'You would think that Dave had based his Betty on her (Jennifer Connelly). The likeness is that uncanny.'***

"When she walked in the door for the screentest, Joe and I thought, 'Wow — she's pretty much there.' Then, when she walked out of make-up, having been done up like Betty, both of us just hung on to each other; we couldn't believe it. We knew that she was the closest thing we'd ever seen to Betty; the closest person we'd tested to Betty."

Though Campbell claims to no longer have the time to follow comics as avidly as he once did, he does still have favorites.

"I go into a comic-book store about once every two months and look through the comics," he admits. "I'm absolutely up to date on Moebius and a few other people. More than

***Here, the action continues with a large explosion on the set.***

anything it's the artwork that involves me, so when I go into a comic-book store, I just sort of look through the racks, pick up a book and it takes me just a second to decide whether I want it or not.

"I have a few favorites. Jack Kirby was a long-time favorite of mine. I have every *Kamandi* he did, until he stopped—which is pretty much when they became worthless to me. Russ Heath I always loved—which is exciting for me, because I hear Heath is doing the adaptation of the screenplay.

"That's really exciting for me, to think I'm gonna be drawn by Russ Heath." ✪

# REMEMBERING THE MIDDLE MAN

*by Michael Berry*

*"The biggest event in (the past) ten years was the emergence of the direct (sales) market."*

*Roger Fletcher: Diamond Distributors*

In the comics industry, as in many others, it's easy to overlook the middle-man. Comics readers patronize certain stores and know which companies publish the titles they like, but they don't give much thought to the distributors, the people who ensure that their favorite books get onto the shelves.

To gain an insight into how distributors view the comics market, WIZARD spoke to representatives from two of the largest companies, Madison, WI-based Capital City Distributors and Diamond Distributors, headquartered in Baltimore, MD.

Asked how the comics market has changed during the past decade, Diamond's director of marketing, Roger Fletcher, said, "The biggest event in that ten years was the emergence of the direct market as the largest outlet for comic merchandise. It used to be that perhaps 80 percent of sales were made on newsstands and maybe 20 percent in specialty shops. Now the percentages are reversed.

"It varies from company to company, but at Marvel and DC, it's safe to say that more than 70 percent of their sales are made in specialty shops."

That reversal has been a boon for distributors. John Davis, co-owner with Milton Griepp of Capital City, said, "Our sales have continued to grow between 10 and 20 percent each year. One part of our growth is that we've picked up additional market share. Another is that we're now carrying a wider variety of products beyond comic books, branching into trading cards, role-playing games and other areas."

A single distributor's success, however, doesn't necessarily reflect an equal amount of expansion in the comic market itself. Davis said, "In terms of individual sales per title, there probably hasn't been that kind of growth. If you look at what *Amazing Spider-Man* sells today and what it sold three or four years ago, there probably won't be that much difference.

"The total number of dollars produced by the comic book industry, however, has grown significantly. I hesitate to quote figures, but according to reports in the *Comics Buyer's Guide* last year, I believe the total is now in excess of $300 million."

Who's reading all these comics? Davis said, "It seems that the demographics for comics readers have remained mostly the same. The average reader is in the 15- to 25-year-old age group, and I think that has remained constant for the past ten years."

Diamond Distributors has compiled the results of a recent survey, and their findings confirm Davis's assumptions. According to Roger Fletcher, "The largest age group we identified were 19- to 25-year-olds, who account for 33 percent of sales." Fletcher said that 13- to 18-year-olds account for 25 percent, 26- to 35-year-olds for 22 percent, preteens for 9 percent and readers over 35 for 11 percent.

The majority of those readers are collectors. Fletcher said, "Seventy percent of purchases are planned, as opposed to 30 percent bought on impulse. The bulk of sales are made to collectors who know what's coming, know what they want, and go and get it."

That's what the comics publishers bank on. Fletcher said, "That's why a series will often start over with a new #1 or why a character will jump from one book to another. When all the elements — a popular character with a popular creative team — come together in one new book, the numbers are going to be very high."

Davis agrees. "Double-covers, bagging and other gimmicks seem to have a positive effect on sales. They do distort what a book would normally sell, but as long they continue to work, publishers will use them."

But do these gimmicks encourage collectors to stockpile certain issues, hoping to reap a huge profit? Davis said,

"I think many collectors are small-time speculators, buying two or three copies of comics they think might appreciate in value. There are some speculators buying in hundreds or case quantities, but I think they're very much in the minority.

"The speculation business has really declined from where it was in the early- to mid-'80s, when the economy was in an inflationary phase and a lot of speculators were buying comics as a hedge against inflation. In the last five years, people have lost the impetus to do that. There will always certain books like a *Spider-Man* or an *X-Force*, where it seems almost impossible to get burned by speculating, but those are really the exception."

***"People are being really choosey about what they buy"***

***John Davis: Capital City Distributors***

The country's new economic climate has definitely affected the comics market. Davis said, "The recession hit the industry about a year ago. It was evidenced in the sharp decline in sales of the higher-priced formats. We saw a drop in the orders on upcoming trade and hardcover graphic novels. People are being really choosy about what they buy."The total number of dollars being spent doesn't seem to have changed that much. There's mainly a realignment of purchasing habits. People are still budgeting the same amount of money they did in the past, whatever amount they feel comfortable spending per week, but they're spreading it out over more products."

***"There will always be certain books, like, Spider-Man or an X-Force, where it seems almost impossible to get burned by speculating."***

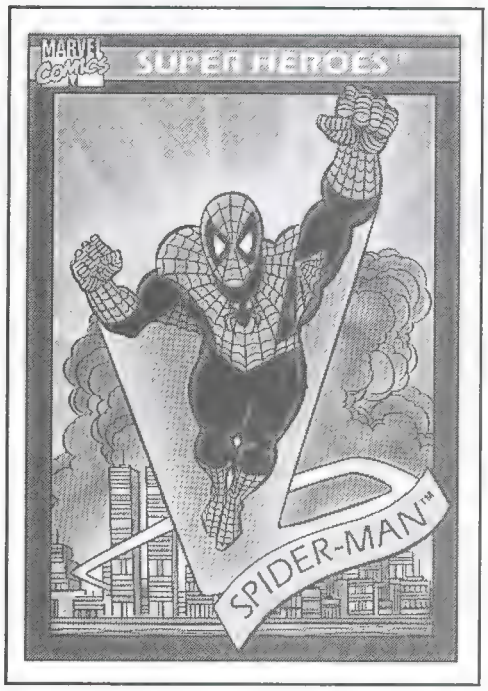
Davis was willing to make a few predictions about how various companies are apt to fare in the near future. He said, "The past few years have been great for Marvel. While Dark Horse's growth has been phenomenal, DC's has been at a more modest rate. I expect all that to continue.

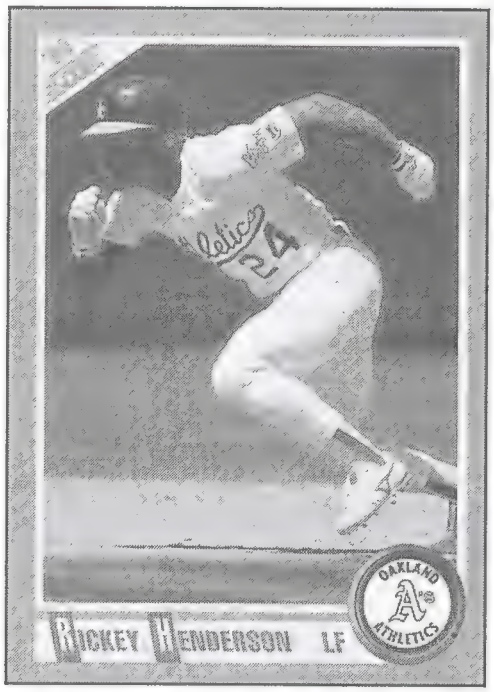
"First has had a serious cutback in its material, no longer producing any superhero titles. Malibu has improved its product line. Publishers like Fantagraphics and Kitchen Sink will continue on the same track as before."

Davis added, "The companies that are on shaky ground are attempting to reorganize. NOW comics, which went bankrupt in February, has new owners and will be resurfacing this summer. Comico, which went into Chapter 11 this winter, has been reorganized and has come out with a couple of titles again."

Fletcher's comments about the future of comics were more general but no less optimistic. "The industry is coming to a crossroads," he said. "More companies are producing material for what you might call 'mass-market consumption,' movie tie-ins and books with more adult themes. I've heard it said that the industry may return to the numbers it had in the '40s, when a typical comic sold millions of copies, as opposed to the few hundred thousand a popular title sells today." ✪

***Michael Berry is a San Francisco-based writer whose credits include reviews of comics-related material for the San Francisco Chronicle.***

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# COMIC CHECKLIST

Hey comic book fans, we discovered this form and decided to print it for you, so every month you can keep track of all the comic books you collect.

| TITLE ISSUE # | QTY. | COVER PRICE | SPECIAL FEATURES |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wizard: The Guide To Comics #2 | lots | $2.50 | Ghost Rider |
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If you have any suggestions for future issues, write:
**Suggestions, P.O. Box 434, Monsey, NY 10952-0434**

# SHOW AND CONVENTION CALENDAR

## ALABAMA

**AUG 3 AL, HUNTSVILLE**, Cards & Comics Collector's Expo, Ramada Inn, 3502 S. Memorial Pkwy, F:$35 A:$1 10am-5pm, Dana Pinkard 404-235-2179

**AUG 31 AL, BIRMINGHAM**, Cards & Comics Collector's Expo, Holiday Inn, 5000 10th Ave. N, Hwy 59 exit 129. F:$35 A:$1 10am-5pm, Dana Pinkard 404-235-2179

## CALIFORNIA

**AUG 2 CA, WEST COVINA**, Baseball card & comic book show, American Legion, 330 N. Azusa Ave. T:35 A:$1, 5pm-10pm, Tim Timora 714-622-1744

## COLORADO

**JULY 27-28 CO, AURORA,** 1991 Sports Card and Comic Show, National Guard Armory, 55 S. Potomanc St. A:$1 10am-4pm Bill Riley 303-366-1946

AUG 17-18 CO, COLORADO SPRINGS, Sportscards & Comics Show II, Rustic Hills Mall, Academy & Palmer Park Blvd. T:30 F:$75 A: $.50 under 10:Free, Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 10am-5pm, Tery Donelson 719-597-0764

## CONNECTICUT

**JULY 28 CT, EAST HARTFORD Conn. Comic** Convention, The E. Hartford Elks Hall, 148 Roberts St. (exit 58 from I-84) F:$35 A:$.99 11am-5pm Hal Kinney 203-289-1208 203-634-3355

**AUG 4 CT, ENFIELD, COLLECTOCON #70,** Harley Hotel, I-91 to Exit 49, T:60 A:$2, 10am-4pm, Dick Sikes 413-781-1995

**AUG 25 CT, EAST HARTFORD** Conn. Comic Convention, The E. Hartford Elks Hall, 148 Roberts St. (exit 58 from I-84) F:$35 A:$.99 11am-5pm Hal Kinney 203-289-1208 203-634-3355

**JULY 28 DE, WILMINGTON,** Serendipity Show, Sheraton Inn, 4727 Concord Pike (Rte. 202), T:30 F:$60 A:$3 11am-4:30pm Bob Horn 301-398-6685

**AUG 4 FL, NAPLES,** Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Naples Moose Club, 5224 N. Tamiami Tr. US 41 & Pine Ridge Rd. T:50 F:$50 A:Free Marge Honkanen 813-574-7731

**JULY 20 GA, BRUNSWICK,** Comic & Star Trek Show, Brunswick Mall, 4420 Altona Ave., T:20 F:$35 A:free 11am-4pm Gary Gay 912-265-5317

**JULY 20 GA, ROME,** Comics & Cards Collector's Expo, Days Inn, Turner-McCall Blvd. T:20 F:$40 A:$1 Dana Pinkard 404-235-2179 or 404-234-8210

**JULY 26-28 GA, ATLANTA,** The Atlanta Fantasy Fair, Hilton & Towers, The Atlanta Fantasy Fair 404-985-1230

**AUG 17 GA, ROME,** Comics & Cards Collector's Expo, Days Inn, Turner-McCall Blvd. T:20 F:$40 A:$1 Dana Pinkard 404-235-2179 or 404-234-8210

## ILLINOIS

**JULY 21 IL, ROSEMONT** America's Largest One Day Comic & Card Show, Rosemont Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

**JULY 28 IL, LOMBARD,** Relax-A-Con, Comic & Collectors Show, Veteran Memorial Hall, 635 N. Parker Dr. T:30 F:$25 A:$1, 9am-3pm Mike Franklin 708-888-1949

**JULY 28 IL, NORTHBROOK,** Mid-American Comics, Cards, & Collectibles Show, American Legion, 1435 Pfingsten, T:40-8ft F:$35 A:free 10am-3pm Pam Collins 708-564-3831

**AUG 3 IL, WAUKEGAN,** Comics & Cards Show, N. Chicago Inn, 2315 Green Bay Rd. T:30 F:$25 A:$1, 10am-3pm James Libasci 708-336-9963

**AUG 4 IL, CHICAGO** Chicago Comic & Card Show, Ford City Holiday Inn, 7353 S. Cicero T:50 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

**AUG 11 IL, HILLSIDE,** Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Holiday Inn (Across from Hillside Shopping Center) A:$1, 10am-3pm Graham Crackers 708-852-1810

**AUG 11 IL, ROSEMONT** America's Largest One Day Comic & Card Show, Rosemont Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$45 A:$2 10am-4pm Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

**AUG 17 IL, ROSEMONT** America's Largest One Day Comic & Card Show, Rosemont Horizon Skyline Room, 6920 N. Mannheim Rd. T:150 F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

**AUG 25 IL, LOMBARD,** Relax-A-Con, Comic & Collectors Show, Veteran Memorial Hall, 635 N. Parker Dr. T:30 F:$25 A:$1, 9am-3pm Mike Franklin 708-888-1949

**AUG 25 IL, NORTHBROOK**, Mid-American Comics, Cards, & Collectibles Show, American Legion, 1435 Pfingsten, T:40-8ft F:$35 A:free 10am-3pm Pam Collins 708-564-3831

**AUG 25 IL, PALATINE** Harper College, 1200 W. Algonquin Rd. Athletic Bldg. T:70+ F:$35 A:$1 10am-4pm Midwest Shows 708-496-3113

## INDIANA

**JULY 26 IN, HIGHLAND,** Monthly Card & Comic Book Show, Wicker Park Social Center, Ridge Rd. at Indianapolis Blvd. T:20 F:$20 A:$1 6pm-10pm Marilyn Hall 219-663-8561

Animation & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn East, 6990 E. 21st. Street (Shadeland Exit off I-70) T:70 F:$45 A:$2 10:30am-4:30pm, 4-6 Guest Artists, Ash Comics 317-251-2339

## MASSACHUSETTS

**AUG 1-4 MA, DEDHAM,** Collector-Fest '91, Bill's Cards & Comic Books, Dedham Mall, Route 1, A:Free, Bill 617-289-8662

AUG 18 MA, AUBURN, Central Massachusetts Toy Show, Auburn Elks Club, 750 Southbridge St. T:60 F:$30 A:$3, Under 12:Free 9am-3pm Bill Bovenzi 508-791-0269

## MICHIGAN

**AUG 10-11 MI, FLINT, MID-MICHIGAN MEGA-CON,** IMA Sports Arena, T:375 F:$175 addnl T:$150-8ft A:$10/12 Day,$15/18 weekend Advance/Door, Jason Moore 313-694-8388

## MISSOURI

**AUG 4 MO, ST. LOUIS** Comic Book Shows, Kolping House, 4035 Keokuk, 1 block South of Gravois, Just off Meramec. A:$1; kids:$.50 11am-3:30pm Anthony Gladish 314-772-1548

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**JULY 25-28 NH, PORTSMOUTH-NEWINGTON,** Bill's Cards & Comic Books, Collector-Fest '91, Newport Mall, Jct, Rt. 1 & Spaulding Tpk & Gosling Rd., A:Free, Bill 617-289-8662

**AUG 8-11 NH, SALEM,** Collector-Fest '91, Bill's Cards & Comic Books, Rockingham Mall, Rt 93 on MA & NH border at Cluffs Crossing exit I & Rt 28, A:Free, Bill 617-289-8662

**AUG 15-18 NH, MANCHESTER**, Collector-Fest '91, Bill's Cards & Comic Books, Bedford Mall,

# SHOW AND CONVENTION CALENDAR

Rt 3 & 3A A:Free, Bill 617-289-8662

## NEW JERSEY

**JULY 20 NJ, HILLSBOROUGH** World of Cards & Comics Convention, 375 rt. 206, Hillsborough Fire Co. No.2 T:45 F:43 A:$1.50 Tony 'TJ' Grimando 908-968-3886

**JULY 21 NJ, TOMS RIVER** Ocean County Comic Convention, K of C #4969, Tennyson & Whittier Aves. T:30 F:$40 A:$1.50 10am-4:30pm Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

**AUG 4 NJ, SEASIDE HEIGHTS** Jersey Shore Comics & Cards Show, American Legion Post #351, Carteret Ave. at Bay Blvd, T:36 F:$40 A:$2 10am-5pm Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

**AUG 4 NJ, SPRINGFIELD** Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 304 rt. 22 West (4 mi. off GSP), Great Eastern Conventions Frederick Greenberg 201-788-6845

**AUG 11 NJ, TINTON FALLS** Monmouth Co. Comics Convention, Tinton Falls Hotel, Garden State Parkway Exit 105 T:30 F:$40 A:$1.50 9:30am-4:30pm Ruth Campbell 908-269-9486

**AUG 18 NJ, S. PLAINFIELD** World of Cards & Comics Convention, Holiday Inn, 4701 Stetton Rd. (off Rt. 287) T:45 F:6ft-$39, 8ft-$43 A:$1.50 10am-4pm Tony 'TJ' Grimando 908-968-3886

## NEW YORK

**JULY 13, NY KINGSTON** MRC Comics Con, Ramada Inn, NYS Thruway Exit 19 & rt. 28 T:35 F:$45 A:$3 10am-4pm MRC Comics 518-283-5306

**JULY 21 NY, FLUSHING** All Star Promotions Monthly Comic & Card Show, Jewish Center 43-00 171st & Northern Blvd T:60-6ft & 8ft F:$32.50-$40 A:$1 or $.50 w/listing 9am-5pm Matthew T DeRoma 718-463-6540

**JULY 26 NY, MIDDLETOWN** Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Howard Johnson's, 551 Route 211 East, Middletown, NY 10940 T:23 F:$75-8ft A:free Marc Meyer, F & M Baseball Cards 914-344-2055

**JULY 28 NY, OZONE PARK**, Comic & Card Show, A. Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd., T:36 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

**AUG 9 NY, MIDDLETOWN** Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Howard Johnson's, 551 Route 211 East, Middletown, NY 10940 T:23 F:$75-8ft A:free Marc Meyer, F & M Baseball Cards 914-344-2055

**AUG 9-11 NY, HORSEHEADS** Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Amot Mall, Exit 50 off rt. 17 (Big Flats), T:65 F:call for info A:free Mall Hours Norm Jackson, Stormin' Promotions 607-797-3213

**AUG 18 NY, FLUSHING** All Star Promotions Monthly Comic & Card Show, Jewish Center 43-00, 171st & Northern Blvd, T:60-6ft & 8ft F:$32.50-$40 A:$1 or $.50 w/listing 9am-5pm Matthew T DeRoma 718-463-6540

**AUG 23 NY, MIDDLETOWN** Comic Book & Baseball Card Show, Howard Johnson's, 551 Route 211 East, Middletown, NY 10940 T:23 F:$75-8ft A:free Marc Meyer, F & M Baseball Cards 914-344-2055

**AUG 25 NY, FARMINGDALE** Comic Book, Card, & Toy Show. Masonic Lodge, 197 Hempstead Tpk. (Rt. 24) between Rt. 135 & Rt. 110, T:35 A:free 10am-4pm Ray or Pat 516-669-4332

AUG 25 NY, OZONE PARK Comic & Card Show, A. Gordon Webster American Legion Hall, 107-10 Rockaway Blvd., T:36 10am-4pm, Joseph Caruana 718-845-7240

## NORTH DAKOTA

AUG 24-25 ND, FARGO Baseball Card & Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn, 13th Ave S. & I-29 T:42 F:$45 Sat:9am-5pm Sun:10am-4:30pm Kevin J Bergson, Lantern News 701-235-2562

## OHIO

**AUG 4 OH, CLEVELAND** Comic Book, Baseball Card, & Movie Nostalgia Show, Day's Hotel, 4600 Northfield Rd., (corner of Emery & Northfield Rds.) F:8ft-$60 Joe Tricarichi 216-932-8596 or John Szuch 216-725-2408

## PENNSYLVANIA

**AUG 4 PA, KING OF PRUSSIA**, FanFair & Collectibles Extravaganza, Disneyana Collector's Convention, Valley Forge Conv. Ctr., T:350 A:$5 1-800-759-SHOW or 508-568-0856.

## RHODE ISLAND

**AUG 11 RI, PROVIDENCE**, J.A.S. Promotions Comic Book Shows, Days Hotel, 220 India St. (exit 3 off 195) T:28 F:$28 A:$1 Jonathan Scungio 401-732-5122

**AUG 18 RI, PROVIDENCE** Pro-Con, Holiday Inn, Atwells Ave at I-95 T:55 F:$40 A:$1.50 10am-4pm Bob Anatone 401-728-0753

## TENNESSEE

**AUG 10 TN, NASHVILLE**, Cards & Comics Collector's Expo, Ramada Inn-Opryland, 2401 Music Valley Dr., F:$35 A:$1 10am-5pm, Dana Pinkard 404-235-2179

## WISCONSIN

**JULY 21 WI, OSHKOSH** Comics & Sportscard Show, Oshkosh Hilton Conv. Ctr., 1 N. Main St., Downtown Oshkosh, Right next to Park Plaza Exit. T:50 F:6ft-$20 A:$1 10am-4pm David or Mary Schwahn 414-463-5170

**JULY 28 WI, BROOKFIELD**, Brewcity West Comic Book Show, Midway Motor Lodge, 1005 S. Moorland Rd. (Exit I-94 at Moorland Rd. S.) T:34, 6ft-8ft F:$20 A:$1 10am-4pm Jonathan Jensen 414-351-1719

**AUG 4 WI, APPLETON** Comics & Sportscard Show, Holiday Inn, 150 Nicolet Rd., 1/4mi. W. of Hwy 41 at College Ave. Exit, T:40 F:6ft-$20 A:$1 10am-4pm David or Mary Schwahn 414-463-5170

**AUG 25 WI, MADISON**, Madcity Comic Book Show, VFW Hall, 133 Lakeside (Hwy. 12 & 18 to Nolan Dr., Exit 263, 1 Mi. to Lakeside) T:34 F:6ft-$20 A:$1 Jonathan Jensen 414-351-1719

## ATTENTION SHOW PROMOTERS

If you wish to have your show listed in this section, please send us a list of all your upcoming shows.

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